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**Lake County breaks ground on the construction of a new Traffic Court**

MUNDELEIN, IL – The 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court and the Lake County Board broke ground today to begin construction of the new Lake County Traffic Court in Mundelein. The South Branch Traffic Court will reduce inordinate caseload pressure and make facilities more available to the communities in the southern region of Lake County.

Equipped with hardhats and shovels, Chief Judge Jane D. Waller, County Board Chairman Suzi Schmidt, and other key representatives from Lake County broke ground this morning to signify the beginning of construction. The anticipated completion date is scheduled for the summer of 2003.

Chairman of the Law & Judicial Committee, Bonnie Thomson Carter stated, "This is an important addition to the court system because it eases caseloads and it brings the justice system closer to residents in the Southern region of the county."

During the design phase, the Division of Transportation conducted drive time studies to determine a location that would require a commute taking 25 minutes or less for residents of Lake County.

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## **LAKE COUNTY TRAFFIC COURT, MUNDELEIN – 2 OF 2**

The main goal throughout the planning process was to design a cost-effective building to accommodate the unique operations of a traffic courtroom. To accomplish this, HLM Design USA from Chicago, the architect for this project, consulted with focus groups of judges, police officers, service providers and other users in designing the building. The construction budget for the new facility is \$1,595,000.

The new South Branch Traffic Court will serve the southern one-third of the county, including Barrington, Lincolnshire and Mundelein. The building will have one judge and one courtroom, an office of the Lake County Circuit Clerk and officers from the Sheriff's Office operating the facility. Hours of operation will be from 8:30AM to 5:00PM.

Chief Judge Jane D. Waller explains that, "The South Branch Traffic Court will hear traffic, ordinance, conservation violation cases and possibly local housing matters. These types of cases do not bring dangerous criminal offenders into the area."

The groundbreaking signifies the completion of the planning process and the beginning of construction. Many people contributed to the planning process, including Circuit and Associate Judges, the State's Attorney, members of the defense Bar, the Sheriff's office, the Circuit Clerks office, the Lake County Board and the Division of Transportation.

County Board Chairman, Suzi Schmidt said that, "This is a great example of what can be accomplished with the partnership between the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit and the Lake County Board."